Towards an Old Growth Strategy

Summary of Public Comments

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Towards an Old Growth Strategy:
Summary of Public Comments

INTRODUCTION

In February and March of 1992, the Old Growth Strategy Project undertook a public review of its document ***Towards an Old Growth Strategy: Public Review Draft***. In twenty-three B.C. communities, discussions were held to assess how well the document matches the needs of the people of the province, what areas have not been addresse, and what areas need improvement. In addition, written submissions were solicited and questionnaires handed out to people who attended the public meetings.

The purpose of this summary is:

1. To provide a reference document for the people who worked together to develop the strategy. This reference document will assist them in refining the strategy and making final recommendations to government.
2. To allow the members of the public to compare their views with those of other people in the province, and to monitor the results of the public review process.

Comments were recorded at the public meetings and many people sent in lengthy individual comments as well as the individual questionnaires which were handed out at the public meetings. All these comments have been reviewed and summarized.

The draft strategy received considerable positive comment, for its attempts to deal with the complex issue of old growth in British Columbia, and for its demonstration of the fact that such a large number of people from a variety of fields devoted so much of their energy to its production. The purpose of the public review was to seek comments on how to further improve the strategy, and there was a great deal of useful constructive criticism which is recorded in this summary.

HIGHLIGHTS OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Integration of the Old Growth Strategy with other land use initiatives

Many members of the public question the number of land use initiatives that are currently underway in the province. People express concern about the apparent lack of coordination among these initiatives, and wonder how the Old Growth Strategy recommendations will fit with other projects.

Integration with the new Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE)

Following from the above concern, respondents wanted to know what role the new Commission on Environment and Resources will play in integrating various land use initiatives including Old Growth.

Adequate levels of socio-economic assessment related to changes in resource management in B.C.
The largest number of comments received related to the need for social and economic assessment of the various reservation and management scenarios proposed by the strategy. Respondents wanted clarification of different values and also expressed concern about processes for measuring and considering them. Many respondents suggested the need to fully explore initiatives that were already in progress around other land use issues in order to analyse the potential of the Old Growth Strategy recommendations.

Forest management policy related to Allowable Annual Cut
Concerns raised in this area were a subset of the socio-economic concerns. People raised various options and projections about changing and not changing the AAC. The overall emphasis was on the need a comprehensive socio-economic assessment around this specific issue.

Public involvement in decision-making
Major concerns about public involvement centred on the feasibility of the consensus process and stakeholder involvement in actual decision-making at the local level. People also raised issues about the need for a conscientious effort to be made to balance the requirements of urban and rural residents of the province. Both of these concern areas reflect the need to clarify the organizational mechanisms that will create an effective role for the public in resource decision-making.

The lack of native involvement in the Old Growth Strategy
Many people expressed concern that First Nations were not part of the Old Growth Strategy Project, and asked for clarification on this issue. It was felt that not including Native values in the Strategy diminished its usefulness.

Perceived imbalance and bias in the Old Growth Strategy Project and related management processes
The membership representation on the Old Growth Strategy Project raised questions about an imbalance of industry and government representatives relative to public interest groups. Additionally, a number of respondents questioned the role of Ministry of Forests as the lead agency for the Old Growth Project because of a perceived historical bias of the ministry in favour of the forest industry.

HOW THE PUBLIC COMMENTS ARE BEING USED

In order to make the best use of all the public comment we have received, they have been separated into three categories. Due to the specific nature of the Old Growth Strategy's mandate the categories are designed to determine:

a. Which comments fall outside the scope of the strategy;

*These issues will be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives. In the summary they are identified with an *.*

b. Which comments are actually addressed in the detail of the strategy but perhaps need elaboration, and;

These issues will be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document. In the summary they are identified with a †.

c. Which comments will require substantive assessment and refinement to improve the strategy document.

These issues will be addressed by Old Growth Strategy Project participants who will attempt to refine and revise the strategy to address these concerns where appropriate. In the summary they are identified with a ***shaded box.***

NEXT STEPS

After the strategy is refined, the implementation process will be discussed at the final project meeting with appropriate authorities represented on the Inter-Ministry Management Committee and the Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE).

OVERALL FOCUS OF THE STRATEGY DOCUMENT

The underlying themes of all public comment on the Old Growth Strategy Public Review Draft were an appreciation for the forest and a concern for the social and environmental well-being of the province. Respondents expressed sincere interest in improving stewardship of the land base in B.C. to better address those concerns.

> *"When I lived in Newfoundland I was told that money doesn't grow on trees, it swims in the sea. Well, there is no cod anymore and the jobs are gone. The difference between the Newfoundlander's economic survival and our's here in British Columbia is that we still have some old growth trees left." (Geraldine Kenny, Kitimat, B.C.)*

Questions about how the Old Growth Strategy Project fits into other land-use initiatives were the most common at public meetings. In the written submissions this was reflected by numerous statements on the need for a comprehensive land use plan to incorporate the various initiatives that have been circulating to the public over the last few years. These are included in the Organizational Structure and Processes section. *

The issue of Native involvement came up at a number of public meetings as well as in submissions. When First Nations people were present at public meetings they raised issues of the need for recognition of their land claim rights and obligations, as well as a desire to participate as equal members in decision-making processes.

"Every effort must be made to encourage involvement and participation from the Native community surrounding the development of the Old Growth Strategy. The value of their potential contribution on matters spiritual and cultural must not be overlooked." (Shawn Hedges, Bella Coola, B.C.)

"If you are to create a true consensus the natives must be participants. The fact that they are not makes me wonder why they aren't and this casts doubt on the whole paper."(Dr. Larry Hill, Nanaimo, B.C.)

A number of written submissions questioned the balance of interests among the project participants and expressed concern that this structure would be replicated in the formation of old growth working groups.

" I agonize at the glaring lack of women on the various teams. The perspective of women is so vital to any land-use issue. I realize the difficulty in finding female representatives for many sectors of our society, but I believe the onus is on us all to do that." (E.M.Shannon, Union Bay, B.C.)

"It has been our observation that there has been very little representation on the Old Growth Strategy Team from people of rural British Columbia. It is essential in land use decisions in this province that people who are most affected by these decisions have a voice in the debate". (Share Our Forests, Cobble Hill, B.C.)

"In my opinion it appears that participants of the 'Old Growth Strategy' are heavily weighed in favour of the forest industry. The forest industry is not required to maintain a level of employment based on labour per cubic metre basis has large sums of money to spend to influence both the public educational institutions and the government with false information on forestry practices and tenure allocations. I do not believe they should have such an influence on land use decisions." (Thomas Collier, Quesnel B.C.)

A number of respondents followed this criticism with suggestions for drawing on specific initiatives from related areas, or groups whose perspectives would be valuable to the planning for old growth values.

"The draft strategy does not recognize all the work that conservation groups have done to identify threatened old growth ecosystems throughout the province. Earthlife Canada Foundation in conjunction with Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society has through the Endangered Spaces Program been conducting research and mapping candidate areas. After much research, the Valhalla Society has now published its second map of proposed park areas. The Sierra Club has recently completed an old growth inventory for Vancouver Island that has produced data and maps more up-to-date than information held by the Ministry of Forests. Rather than 'reinventing the wheel', the Old Growth Task Force should coordinate its efforts with the expert research and knowledgeable proposals accomplished by B.C. conservation organizations." (British Columbia Environmental Network Forest Caucus, Chase, B.C.) †

A number of people commented that the academic and technical language of the document made it difficult for the general public to understand. Suggestions were made to keep the level of the writing simple and straightforward to avoid excluding anyone from the process of review and critique. A number of people suggested that all of the terms and jargon used in the report should be included in the glossary with simple explanations to clarify some of the complex issues under discussion. †

"It gets bogged down in 'academic verbiage' beyond the comprehension of ordinary people." (Sedley Sweeny, Cortes Island, B.C.) †

† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

"It would be condescending to explain terms on every page; however, additions to the glossary could prevent confusion." (Kathy Banky, Hornby Island, B.C.) †

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Comments at public meetings and individual written submissions raised a number of points about the public's role in the strategy. These issues are raised throughout this summary, but are provided here as an overview. Issues related specifically to consensus and stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes are raised in the Values and Organizational Structure and Process Sections.

Goals

Need for meaningful involvement in decision-making at both the strategic and technical level based on acknowledgment of public ownership of the land base. †

"The report does not adequately address the issue of public education. The issue of forest succession and ecological inter-relationships is complex and central to the 'Old Growth' debate. It can be stated with some certainty that the 'public' are not well informed on this matter and that any contribution by the 'public' will be based more on emotion than a deep understanding of the subject. While public input is being solicited and meetings are scheduled in a number of locations, without a mechanism to ensure a high level of public understanding the results will be incomplete and unrepresentative." (B.C. Environmental Information Institute, Vancouver, B.C.) †

Need for more education in school curriculum and to wider public to make involvement relevant. *

"We need to focus on a new education program; to encourage cooperation over competition. To encourage flexibility and to be open to new ideas, new ways of doing things." (questionnaire response, no name given) *

"At a very early stage, you need to pin down just what your educational requirements are. This may include different information (qualitatively speaking) to different user groups. Educations major role, as I see it, is to transcend the currently acrimonious atmosphere of 'us against them'." (Andrew Park, Smithers, B.C.) *

Education about forests should have a community-based component drawing on knowledge of Native groups and older people with experience in forestry. †

"Research and forestry practices from the past, before clear cutting was commonly used should definitely be looked at. We already know what [effect] current logging practices have on our forests, especially old growth forests, so anything would be an improvement." (no name given) †

Processes

Many respondents were interested to know what role(s) they would be able play in the strategy from this point on. People want to know how the general public can follow and monitor the progress of the Old Growth Strategy as it is implemented. *

* To be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives.
† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

"I recommend that the ways in which input received in the public involvement process is a) assessed b) weigned c) incorporated into the decision-making process be articulated and communicated to all participants, now and in an ongoing way." (Patricia Keays, Powell River, B.C.) *

Some people felt that there may be a role for the public in practical forest management work as needs are identified by the Strategy, this could include public stewardship in rehabilitation of clearcuts, or public assistance in doing inventories in specific areas. People also requested clarification on public accountability, wanting to know what the public would be responsible for if they were involved in land-use decision-making, how they would be trained to handle those responsibilities and how they would be held to them. †

A number of people stated that they did not feel resource agency staff would be capable of handling the public involvement component of the Old Growth Strategy. There were concerns about the neutrality of Ministry of Forests staff, and it was obvious from the responses that many people perceive them to be biased in favour of industry.

The issue of imbalance of opportunity for the rural and urban public came up repeatedly in the comments at meetings and submissions. There is a strong feeling that extra effort needs to be made to ensure the rural people of British Columbia are allowed to participate equally in Old Growth Strategy processes. This is in recognition of the fact that in most cases it will be the rural population of the province who will be most immediately impacted by any changes introduced.

Several respondents pointed out that the responsibility for our current situation must be shared. *

"All British Columbians are responsible for the negative situation relative to the forest industry in B.C. We condoned (perhaps through lack of knowledge) over-cutting and in some instances, abuse of our forest resource. We were all happy withthe jobs, the dollars and the resultant standard of living that this over-use gave us. No sector of society — logging companies, forest companies, forest ministry, foresters, loggers or accepting residents can be singled out as we are all jointly responsible for the current situation." (Bruce Cooper, Duncan, B.C.) *

Resources

The issue of resources to assist the public in their work with processes requiring their time was also raised by respondents, particularly because of the number of public processes that have happened in the province over the last few years. People are wondering when action will be taken. At the same time a number of respondents said they are very tired of being asked to expend the time and energy to review and comment on new initiatives, without the inspiration of seeing any results from, or responses to, their previous efforts. *

"We constantly receive documents or reports on land use issues that have to be considered – we have a difficult time setting priorities, how much time we can afford to spend on certain documents. The expense can be significant. Some participants have paid representatives while others must carry the expense from small resource bases. i.e. local communities who generally are effected most seriously." (questionnaire response, no name given) *

* To be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives.
† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

"My concern is how a volunteer process participant (i.e. member of an environmental or other relevant non-profit group) can afford a communication strategy. Or how does an individual, who may have many useful ideas and could contribute immensely to the process, become 'widely supported' and 'empowered to make decisions' These criteria seem to favour large well-known organizations rather than giving an average unaffiliated citizen the chance to be a participant." (Karen Mullen, Ladysmith, B.C.) *

Other people felt there has been inadequate information of the costs of initiatives like the Old Growth Strategy to allow informed decision-making about the changes that are being suggested. †

"Will the public be made aware of the true costs of implementing this strategy before it is adopted ? Will the public be allowed the opportunity to comment on the strategy in light of its true cost ?" (no name given, Vancouver, B.C.) †

"The taxpayer of B.C. should also be told of any and all cost associated with this report and the cost of implementing any findings. " (Carol Lundy, Pt Alberni, B.C.) †

DEFINITION

Questions and comments on the definitions of old growth provided in the strategy covered a wide range of specific issues and reflected some of the dilemmas raised within the project itself.

There was a call for clarification of what old growth is in different areas of the province and what old growth is at different elevations. Respondents provided comment on the use of particular terms and the rationale presented for theapplication of specific criteria such as minimum age and non-ecological determinants. †

"Definition of minimum ages are largely irrelevant since most observers of old growth tend to compare individual tree sizes to that of maximums observed in similar biogeoclimatic zones; the general public is not likely aware of exact ages of individual monster trees." (Ronald Ptolemy, no address given) †

The perspective that old growth should be considered as a system, rather than just as trees, was also raised ... †

"It appears that old growth is defined only in terms of the trees. This is unfortunate as it ignores the complexity of these areas, particularly the composition of the soils., wildlife and other biological attributes." (Ecological Action Group, Victoria, B.C.) †

"The document you have produced is very effective and valuable, however we have one major concern. As we discussed at the meeting, it is apparent that grasslands, shrubland , and riparian systems will not be addressed directly by the old growth strategy process. We have concerns that these systems will 'fall through the cracks'."(BioQuest International Consulting, Kimberly, B.C.) *

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VALUES

Responses to the Old Growth Strategy Public Review Draft reflect that values are very personal, and clearly demonstrate the wide range of opinion about how values should be considered.

Clarification

People commented and provided written submissions aimed at clarifying how they perceive and value old growth, and other age class forests, in different inter-relations and systems including:

- human and non-human;
- ecological and social; and
- global and local values.

> *"who speaks for non-human beings in this anthropocentric strategy ? Do our desires for commercial exploitation outweigh the basic survival needs of countless other species whose home we invade." (Joe Percival, Victoria, B.C.)* †

> *"Attempting to isolate the values of 'Old Growth' from the value of other 'Age Classes' is a bit impractical. When one examines the concept of values within the framework of broadly defined 'Old Growth' it is apparent that as the characteristics of the 'Old Growth' are changing over time, the values must also be changing." (B.C. Environmental Information Institute, Vancouver, B.C.)* *

> *"The forest industry has been the backbone of the B.C. economy for a long time. Our goal must be to provide employment not only for the working life of those presently engaged in the woods and associated industries, but for their children and grandchildren." (no name available)* *

> *" The planet is in a critical stage. We are all responsible for globally responsible actions ... B.C. is not exemplary and it should be. B.C. has a wonderful opportunity to show the world responsible action regarding our forest practices." (E.M. Shannon, Union Bay, B.C.)* *

Processes for Considering Values

In relation to a process for considering values some respondents felt that the number of values was unwieldy and would inhibit the consensus process. †

> *"I feel that consensus would be easier to attain if the options to fragment opinion are limited. To that end, I think the strategy would be better served by reducing the number of values for the listed 16 to only 10." (Bill Kruisselbrink, Valemont,B.C.)* †

Many people were concerned about the lack of detailed explanation and clarity in the document about how Multiple Accounts Analysis will work. †

> *" I hope that the Multiple Accounts Framework is not representative of the framework that will be used in practice. Multiple Accounts Analysis must compare all old growth values for various alternatives, not just economic values as your sample suggests." (Mike Teachman, Victoria, B.C.)* †

> *"You have run into the perennial problem of accountants: how do you put a monetary value on an intangible? Chartered Accountants have managed to account for goodwill, their intangible, and you need to do the same for environmental values or you will not be able to compare them to the money and jobs produced, for example, by a pulp mill." (S.J. Skinner, Nepean, Ontario)* †

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As mentioned in the section about the overall focus of the document, concerns were expressed that differences in local and urban values are not recognized or balanced. Additionally a number of people stated concerns that consensus will be unbalanced due to uneven resources and power among stakeholders. †

> *" ... seventy percent of all communities and regions outside of the southwestern urban centres depend on the forest sector for their economic well-being. Old growth forests represent the anchor to which the social fabric and individual self-worth are tied." (Dave Harrison, Campbell River, B.C.)* †

> *" The problem with consensus is that forest companies are here to make money, environmentalists to preserve what's left of the forests. When the forest companies inevitably run out of old growth, they will be lobbying for more. It is all very well to establish a strategy, but if a future, forest industry-friendly government is returned, what is there to stop them from enacting legislation to remove reserves to special management areas and special management into commodity emphasis areas? What entrenched processes will be put in place to protect old growth." (Canadian Earthcare Society, Kamloops, B.C.)* †

There was also discussion and written comment on the need to emphasize consideration of values over the long term. †

> *" The consensus-building negotiations approach is a good tool for conflict resolution. One prerequisite should be added to the three listed at the bottom of page 13: 'The parties should have a strong commitment to serve the long term public interest, rather than their own short-term personal gain'." (Joop Burgerjon, Halfmoon Bay, B.C.)* †

Socio-Economic Considerations and Alternatives

Many people recognize a gap in our knowledge of social and economic inter-relations and what the impacts will be depending on how we choose to deal with the old growth forests in B.C. Comments indicate a felt need for a comprehensive social and economic impact analysis for B.C. as an immediate priority for the province.

> *"Do we need to stop logging all old growth ? If not how much can we log to maintain the biodiversity required plus maintain some form of logging ? Economic as well as social implications need to be determined." (W.G. Wilson, Qualicum Beach, B.C.)* †

> *"We are also concerned with loss of employment in the forest industry. However we feel that most job loss is due to Free Trade, G.A.T.T. , countervailing duties against softwood, and world market conditions, plus technological change." (Harry Allen, Quathiaski Cove, B.C.)* •

> *"As you are very aware, in B.C. according to the Ministry of Forests approximately 90% of all commercial harvest in B.C. is old growth, and in my areas we have marginal cutting of second growth meaning that if pressure groups have their way we will be shutting down the forest industry. And for what ?" (Carol Lundy, Pt Alberni, B.C.)* •

> *" The impact of proposed actions under the Old Growth Strategy should certainly be assessed for impact on the security of resource dependent communities, on the economic viability of industry and workers, and on provincial government revenues and the provincial economy. But such assessment must be on a long term basis. Sound forest management and preservation of old growth reserves may cause difficulties in the short term, while offering a long term, sustainable pay-off in permanent jobs, communities and tax revenues. Conversely, maintaining present forestry practices may have attractive*

• To be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives.
† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

short-term implications but will very clearly have a disastrous long term effect, with declining employment, deserted forest-industry towns, and sharply reduced provincial revenues. The long-term implications should be part of the assessment of any permit to log in British Columbia, just as it should be for implementation of the Old Growth Strategy." (Richard Bocking, Victoria, B.C.) †

In order to do effective analysis of what options are available to British Columbians there were a number of suggestions that costs and benefits of alternative management scenarios and practices should be compared, and that alternative production options should be considered and supported. †

"One of your proposed actions is 'conversion to young forests' i.e. continued liquidation, followed by more land in short (normal) rotations. This results in a very diminished supply of older quality wood with high value added potential. I hope you carefully assess this proposed action for its impact on the economic viability of value added industry and workers (present and future potential) and on provincial revenues and economy. This has bearing on the land allocated to extended rotations." (Bruce Davies, Surge Narrows B.C.) †

" I have a small woodworking business on the East Shore. My main concern is a quality, steady wood supply at good prices, preferably tight fine grain wood. It is amazing to me that the Ministry of Forests has little to offer to encourage secondary industry here. With all the wood in our forests being shipped or contracted elsewhere, it is very difficult to find a good selection of quality wood to base a value-added business here in the Kootenays." (Don Ryane, Riondel, B.C.) †

"[Put] more emphasis on jobs for locals doing forestry work, more management on second growth" (questionnaire response, no name given, Nelson, B.C.) †

"It is appropriate that help should be given to communities dependent on our old growth forests, but other values must be weighed very carefully against the value of maintaining jobs. We are moving into an age when most workers must be prepared to change their careers 2 or 3 times in a lifetime. We need to be more flexible and more creative in looking for alternative jobs that are less invasive on the environment." (Environment Group, Canadian Federation of Women, Kelowna, B.C.) †

Many of the comments related to values highlighted a need to acknowledge conflicts between rates of consumption and goals of sustainability. They also expressed a need to explore alternative, more sustainable raw materials for pulp and paper products currently manufactured from wood. *

"Education should concentrate on getting people to face the limits of growth and gradually adjust to concepts of sustainable development and possibly even a decline in population and living standards." (questionnaire response, no name given) *

"I would like my grandchildren to have the chance to make fine musical instruments of native wood, for this is part of our cultural heritage. Can we sustain the supply of old growth wood to the inhabitants of this region while pretending to supply the same to the whole world as well?" (David Shipway, Cortes Island, B.C.) *

"This project is a step in the right direction, however, a missing component of this strategy is identification of alternatives to old growth logging. As pointed out earlier, sooner or later this province is going to run out of old growth available to the forest industry, and they will either pressure the government for more or leave. We cannot afford either alternative." (Canadian EarthCare Society, Kamloops, B.C.) *

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† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

" ... the accompanying literature addresses that issue, laying down a convincing case for using an alternative resource – Hemp (Cannabis sativa) – for our pulp and paper needs. If this route was taken, employment spin-offs would be just what our resource-based communities need. For paper is not the only commercial product to be derived from this plant. Rope, cloth, biomass fuel in the form of ethanol, any product made from petroleum, plus food from the seeds for human and livestock consumption just to name a few." (Suzan Roos, Victoria, B.C.) *

INVENTORY

Most of the questions about inventories focused on the size and scope of current provincial inventories. †

" I find it difficult to believe that after 40 years of forest cover mapping and an extensive Canada Land Inventory in the late '60s, some estimates cannot be made as to the amount of Old Growth Forest remaining. Estimates I have heard range from as little as 10% to as much as 30%. In some areas such as Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland, the remaining old growth is likely less than 10%." (Jim Vickerson, Sardis, B.C.)†

"The public should have access to the inventory database. Furthermore the inventory data must be available in formats that can be understood (i.e. clearly explained) by the public. (Mike Teachman, Victoria, B.C.) †

It was pointed out that the Old Growth Strategy Public Review Draft does not clarify plans to inventory biodiversity and other non-timber values of old growth and some concern was expressed about potential bias in inventory information. †

"Forest inventory should include recreation, aesthetic (landscape) and wilderness." (S. Rosang, Terrace, B.C.) †

" I am pleased to see that the province is developing a resource inventory. The trouble with inventories of this type is that they quantify the marketable resource (they count the hemlocks, not the red squirrels that live among the trees) and ignore other resources. It is unfortunate that in describing the biogeographic zone, trees are the indicator species. The other problem with inventories of this type is that they assign a number to the resource without consideration for the accessibility of the resource." (Peter Freeman, Prince Rupert B.C.) †

"Inventory and biodiversity studies should not be conducted by industry who would benefit from not looking for other old growth values." (Jim Wright, Victoria, B.C.) *

There was some concern expressed over resources required to do inventories, and suggested alternatives which included public involvement in collecting local inventory information. †

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† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

RESERVE FRAMEWORK

Planning for Reserves

Public comment on the planning process for reserves pointed out the need for clarification of processes for selecting and acquiring land to meet and maintain representative old growth standards considering scarcity and the dynamic nature of many old growth systems. A number of people raised questions about the possibility of making trades of over-represented areas for those with scarce forest types. Others wanted to know if old growth areas would be replaced if they are destroyed by insects or fire. An additional issue raised, was the need to expand the type of reserve planning outlined for old growth to include wider ecosystems such as grasslands and wetlands.

A number of respondents expressed concern over the level of true government commitment to reserving old growth and the capability of agency staff to guide reserve decision-making process. *

> *"The only provincial body related to the environment involved in the IMC seems to be the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks. Its commitment to the environment in the past has not been wholehearted. Perhaps a representative could be appointed who has a real commitment to the environment – e.g. a suitable civil servant." (Environment Group, Canadian Federation of University Women, Kelowna, B.C.)* *

A few people suggested an alternative process of reserving all forest land, using consensus to decide on best harvesting options. Others felt that we can accommodate old growth in existing reserve systems and there is a need to consider the option of not reserving old growth at all in certain parts of the province.

> *"You have the process backward. Old growth should be saved and only logged if the long term social and economic reasons become compelling and adequate management is in place." (questionnaire response, no name given, Campbell River, B.C.)* *

> *"Share the Caribou Chilcotin Resources Society members realize that 'Old Growth' attributes are an important part of the diversity of the forests in B.C. We feel management of these should be maintained under reserve status already in place, under wildlife habitat restrictive areas, and within the working management plans of the forest licence holder; not by alienating more land from multiple use for a single purpose designation." (Share the Caribou Chicotin Resources Society, Williams Lake, B.C.)* †

> *"Finally, in the central interior we do not see the need to conserve old growth from logging. We feel the old growth forest can be effectively managed within the context of the provincial forest. Through a sound forest management strategy that considers the importance of biological diversity, the old growth forest function will never disappear." (Cariboo Lumber Manufacturers Association, Williams Lake, B.C.)* †

Additionally, people in some of the border regions of the province called the projects attention to the possible need to acknowledge where national and international boundaries might impact planning for wildlife habitat. †

Reserve Criteria

Many people had questions and suggestions on how the reserve criteria need to be clarified and refined to show the important inter-relation of watershed issues, biodiversity and old growth, as well as a need for geographic representation criteria.

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† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

"The Strategy should assess the degree of threat which each ecozone is in with regards to the amount of intact forest remaining which may be incorporated into the wilderness protection system. Some ecosystems such as low elevation, valley-bottom riparian old growth are in danger of being under-represented due to insufficient areas of intact forest left. These areas should be given a higher priority when determining areas for protection in the province." (Chad Henderson, Victoria, B.C.) †

"[The Strategy]should include language about the importance of maintaining full biodiversity in order to ensure the future health of the planet and all its inhabitants including human beings. The section should refer to the importance of preserved old growth to wildlife and fish habitat." (Tom Gore, Victoria, B.C.) †

"Each geographical area should have a representative area of old growth e.g. Caren Range as only sample on Sechelt Peninsula to allow for local biohistory and local study." (Pam Robbins, Halfmoon Bay, B.C.) †

People asked for clarification of how the dynamic nature of old growth will be considered in assessing old growth areas, and what plans exist to incorporate the variables presented by seral stages of forests and boreal forests. Some respondents felt these issues were insufficiently addressed in the Public Review Draft. †

"In terms of whether to log or to conserve old growth, we must recognize that forests are dynamic. The forest we see today will not be the same forest of tomorrow despite our actions. In developing a strategy, we need to remember that old growth is just one stage in the growth of the forest. Any strategy for the management of the old growth stage must be incorporated into a complete strategy for the management of the forest through all stages." (Cariboo Lumber Manufacturers' Association, Williams Lake, B.C.) †

Clarification was also requested about the range of forests types that will be considered for reservation, specifically whether hardwood species will be considered for reserve status and if older second growth will be reserved in areas where there is extreme scarcity of true old growth. †

"We must keep in mind that in the Southern Vancouver Island region there is a large area of advanced second growth which in the not too distant future will become old growth and should be looked at for its unique qualities." (questionnaire response, no name given, Duncan, B.C.) †

The issue of size and viability of reserved areas to meet various values – with a specific emphasis on wildlife habitat – was raised repeatedly in public meetings and written submissions. The option of temporary reserves to provide for future cutting and to allow for development of improved harvesting techniques that will not compromise habitat was also raised from various perspectives. †

"Essential to isolate as much as possible from reserves. Biological criteria must be given the preference in determining reserve sizes. Minimum size criteria done on a species basis to maintain genetic diversity (i.e. minimum viable population). Intensive forest management as we know it today contradicts 'taking into account old growth attributes' A radical change in thinking is needed here." (Karen Mullen, Ladysmith, B.C.) †

Deferrals

The issue of deferrals was brought up at meetings and in the written submissions, there were a wide diversity of views on need for both moratoriums and permanent deferrals.

* To be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives.
† To be larified and elaborated in the strategy document.

"It is better to err on the side of conservatism (keep options open) but lengthy moratoriums are in reality defacto decisions." (questionnaire response, no name given) †

"We are currently in a situation in which we don't have time to wait until all the data has been compiled and consensus has been reached about what should be preserved and how what's left should be cut. Not that the process should be stopped; it should go on but it is imperative that the B.C. Government defer from logging all of the old growth forests in the province which are known to have other high values (i.e. for biological, cultural, recreational, economic (tourism) reasons) for the duration of the Old Growth Strategy Process. If this doesn't occur it will become yet another 'talk and log' process and future options will foreclose as it proceeds." (Lorna Walsh, Tofino, B.C.)

"The 18 month 'log around' deferrals secured largely by grassroots activism has done more to protect critically important, threatened old growth than the old growth strategy has. This is teaching the populace that blockades are more effective than participating in government processes. (Western Canada Wilderness Committee, Vancouver B.C.) *

"[I] agree that a more effective process of consultation is required. Process initially appeared to address only preservationist community's concerns." (Dave Harrison, Campbell River, B.C.) †

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Policy and Forest Management Planning

In the areas of forest management there were a great many opinions and concerns expressed about issues related to the Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) for the province. Many respondents raised issues about deferrals creating pressure to increase cutting in non-deferred areas as well as what the impact of the current AAC on existing old growth in the province. *

"When the land base shrinks, communities suffer initially and governments suffer in the long run due to reduced forest revenues and increased social service and unemployment expenditures. This fact was really hammered home two weeks ago after attending a local community meeting of small business owners and loggers at Hagensborg. At this meeting, the 34% AAC reduction was discussed on how it would affect the local community. With a possible downturn of 500,000 m^3 within the midcoast TSA, this would be a major blow to the community." (Bill Lasuta, no address given) *

"When an area is deferred, the equivalent AAC for the land should be removed from the forest base. If this is not done then the harvesting is concentrated more in other areas which may result in problems." (Chad Henderson, Victoria, B.C.) *

"Rather than have studies on the social and economic consequences of a potential reduction in AAC, there should be studies into the long term social and economic consequences of having had AAC's set artificially high all these years. That would place the consequences of reduction in a more realistic perspective." (Rosemary Fox, Smithers B. C.) *

* To be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives.
† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

Respondents also provided a variety of opinions on appropriate frameworks for planning forest management, these included:
- landscape level boundaries
- watersheds or other ecological boundaries
- current administrative boundaries

> *"While I applaud your continual reference to landscape planning, I think your approach is fundamentally flawed by a problem of scale. I believe that the basic problem stimulating our current confrontational style, is land use planning at the bureaucratic scale – such as TFL or TSA. Therefore I disagree with your underlying principle (page 2) of incorporation within 'existing forest and land use planning' We need a new landscape(ecosystem) unit of planning much larger than the example provided in Figure 6. Without this broader view you will rarely be able to make the trade-offs necessary to achieve consensus amongst your stakeholders." (Dr. John Woods, Revelstoke B.C.)*

> *"Boundaries should not be ecologically considered without considering the economic impact of such an adjustment." (Dave Harrison, Campbell River B.C.)* †

> *" Shouldn't values on the landscape unit be integrated rather than recognizing old growth targets ? Old growth should not be the hub around which everything turns ... who is to do the landscape plans ? Is this regional or local, by professional or concerned committees, and who pays ?" (Bell Pole Co. Ltd., Lumby, B.C.)* †

Some respondents called for a reassessment of TFL agreements, and a change in the tenure system which would put more land into smaller and area based tenures. *

> *"Very little is mentioned on the important issue of "Land Use Designation" and its direct relationship to tenure. Small scale forestry such as woodlots or silviculture leases held by families and individuals, such as loggers, silviculture workers, small farmers and other local people should be considered in the scheme of land use planning." (Thomas Collier, Quesnel,B.C.)* *

> *"Tenure reform strategy committee must be commenced to discuss small management units based on watersheds." (questionnaire response, no name given. Quesnel, B.C.)* *

A number of people at public meetings as well as those submitting comments felt that the commodity emphasis of the strategy needs to be carefully rationalized and clarified. †

> *"Most of our forest lands should be subject to the landscape planning process, so that managing for old growth attributes can be the norm for logging almost everywhere. 'Commodity emphasis' suggests the vast clearcuts followed by plantation-type forests to which, sadly, we have become accustomed in B.C. If this is the meaning of 'commodity emphasis', then it should be a model followed only in the rarest of cases." (Richard Bocking, Victoria, B.C.)* †

The lack of communication between bureaucrats who are participating in forest management planning and the experienced people who work at the field level was brought up in meetings and submissions. To some extent these issues reflect the concerns people stated about an imbalance of opportunity for rural and urban populations to participate in public involvement aspects of the Strategy. †

There were also a number of points made in meetings about the planning difficulties faced by industry when the status of land-use is in a major state of flux. *

* To be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives.
† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

Reserve Management

A number of people commenting on this aspect of the Old Growth Strategy felt that reserves should not be managed at all, but should be left alone to follow whatever natural processes might take place. There was also a variety of opinion expressed about whether reserves should by definition exclude human activity of any kind. Other people raised questions about the possibility or potential for combining forest restoration and reserve development. Still others requested clarification on how reserve management for old growth would be met by forest management schemes that currently exist in parks and ecological reserves.

Comments received and questions raised at public meetings highlight a need to clarify management objectives for reserves, especially how to address issues of natural disturbance, pocket areas, biodiversity. †

> *" In recent years , a great deal of research in the science of ecology has pointed to the desirability of preserving extensive, uninterrupted tracts of wilderness, as opposed to larger numbers of smaller pockets of wilderness. A single region of a given size will support a greater genetic variability and therefore more viable populations, than will several separated regions totalling the same area." (Gordon Henry, Burnaby, B.C.)* †

> *"The tool kit essentially contains designations under which old growth values can be preserved yet back on p. 30 'management' objectives for old growth are discussed. Are we talking about trying to save enough large trees and snags to keep the owls happy, assuming these species are not driven out by the activity." (Jim Vickerson, Sardis, B.C.)* †

Special Management

Many of the comments on special management were related to how reserve system planning, special management and commodity emphasis overlap and fit together to accommodate the range of forest values and to deal with forest changes related to harvesting and natural disturbance.

> *"I feel the commodity emphasis category should be eliminated; and special management be applied to all lands! Of course old growth doesn't currently exist on all lands; but in those cases the forests should be allowed to develop into more natural forests, and to mature into old growth condition, whatever that will be at that time in the future." (Marilyn Taylor, Revelstoke B.C.)* †

> *"[The strategy is] poor on incorporation in 'managed forest' i.e. boreal forest old growth spruce will windthrow if any 'management activity' occurs."(questionnaire response, no name given)* †

> *"Therefore, if the conservation of isolated old growth structures and functions is to remain as part of the Old Growth Strategy, the distinction between old growth and old growth attributes must be made crystal clear, both in terms of definition and in terms of the preservation of old growth." (Sierra Club of Western Canada, Vancouver, B.C.)* †

> *"Special management is practiced rarely at present in B.C. Most people would agree there is a need to create this middle ground to carry us through this transition and into the future. ... We recommend more uneven age management using partial cutting systems, and again I'm stressing the need for the appropriate technology and operators being familiar with stewardship principles." (East Shore Forest Council, Nelson B.C.)* †

* To be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives.
† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

A number of respondents wanted to know when the transition to adaptive management would start and how long it would take. There were also questions about what research has been done, and what precedents exist, to back-up the assumptions that it is possible to maintain old growth attributes using special management techniques. †

There was also comment on lower impact practices. Some people presented specific suggestions while others felt there was a need for careful consideration of trade-offs between proposals for smaller clearcuts which could require more roads to be built. †

> *"Instead of huge machinery, cats, skidders, feller-bunchers etc. which trample everything in their path, perhaps it is time to get back to more reasonable methods of selective logging with small crawlers and, yes, even horses."* *(Boundary Naturalists, Grand Forks, B.C.)*†

In the coastal regions there was also a concern about the particular sensitivities of island ecosystems.

> *"Special management in multiple use zones such as islands should be limited to selection harvesting, maintaining forest cover and watershed protection, through a joint management goal with private land holders."* *(David Shipway, Cortes Island, B.C.)* †

Implementation, Monitoring and Analysis

The need for more comprehensive analysis, controlled implementation of practices and stronger monitoring and enforcement regulations or policies was raised in a number of meetings, and in some of the written submissions. Many of related points have come up in the sections on Values, Public Involvement and Organizational Structures and Process.

The main needs identified are for:

- Analysis of long term sustainability with current and alternative harvesting systems. †
- A move away from volume assessments to make projections of value available from various harvest and production scenarios. *
- A system for ongoing dissemination of research information to the field level. *
- Incorporation of monitoring systems for biodiversity in special management areas. *
- Clarification of how management practices will be trialed and audited and who is accountable for their success or failure.
- Stricter enforcement of management practices requirements. *

* To be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives.
† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

Forest Practices

Forest practices were also a concern area for a number of people. Many people felt that more training should be provided to loggers and equipment operators to assist workers to be most effective in implementing recommendations of the Old Growth Strategy. There was also a call for more training for foresters, focussing more on the ecological aspects of forests, to assist them to be more holistic managers. There was also a recognition of the need to reinforce recommendations of the strategy by including them in the Forest Practices Act.

> *"Managing the commercial forest to include old growth attributes should be a part of proper forest practices, and, as such should be dealt with under the Forest Practices Act." (Sierra Club of Western Canada, Vancouver, B.C.)*

The use of herbicides and pesticides was cited as a major issue by a number of people as was the need to develop more labour intensive ways of managing the forest to create alternate forest-based jobs. One respondent touched on both issues: †

> *"Hire local manpower to manually clear undergrowth. Management practices must include no chemical treatment. Hire local people to control by manual means. Employ the local media to facilitate this." (Lynn Vanderpoll, Madeira Park, B.C.)* †

Questions were raised about the flexibility of the Old Growth Strategy to accommodate management for high value species such as Yew trees, which are now being used to produce cancer drugs. This type of special management was also seen as a possible way of creating more forest jobs. Silviculture was raised as a forest practice which should be increased in order to create more jobs and facilitate improved and diversified practices.†

> *"The draft fails to recognize that there are existing silvicultural systems, in use for centuries, that protect and maintain old growth structures and functions. Examples are long rotation natural regeneration shelterwood, stem-by-stem and group selection systems." (Western Canada Wilderness Committee, Vancouver, B.C.)* †

Mixed rotations practices were cited as an option that should be explored to meet a number of the special management concerns.†

> *"Rather than creating old growth reserves at the expense of the working forest lands, we should switch to a system of mixed forest rotations. In other words instead of having additional large untouched old growth areas, lets switch to a system that has 200 year rotations in some areas and 80 to 120 year rotations in other areas." (Share Our Forests, Cobble Hill, B.C.)* †

> *"I would like some (not all) stands to be put on a longer rotation than an economic rotation. That way there would be some 'big trees' for people and wildlife while forests would not be susceptible to rot, fire, bugs." (questionnaire response, no name given)* †

Many people acknowledged that the issue of worker safety was critical and needed to be considered in the light of alternative forest practices, this respondent raised the issue of a precedent situation in Washington state where alternate practices and safety were found to be quite compatible. †

* To be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives.
† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

"Your principle statement concerning worker safety during the development of management practices to conserve old growth attributes is unrefutable. I do take issue with previous positions of the Workers' Compensation Board against alternative forms of harvesting. ... My point is that the Workers' Compensation Board is not maintaining an open mind on such matters and their inflexibility may hinder the development of future old growth management practices." (Shawn Hedges, Bella Coola, B.C.) †

Resource Constraints: Ecological, Human, Financial

Many types of resource constraints were identified and raised for discussion or included in written submissions. There was considerable concern expressed about dwindling forest resource and the general lack of understanding about the renewable nature of forests e.g., falldown rate and lack of younger stands. †

"The recommendations on p.42 associated with economics, assume that old growth and old growth attribute preservation impose a net cost on society. Where are the data to support this assumption ? How do the costs compare to the benefits ? There may, in fact, be net benefits in reducing AACs to preserve old growth and old growth attributes – associated with insect predators reducing insect damage in nearby plantations, or people being more productive at work following their experience in old growth, etc. Why should the landscape planning process consider only the costs ?" (Federation of Mountain Clubs of B.C., Vancouver, B.C.) †

There was recognition from a number of respondents that effective trials of management practices will create unmanageable work loads for forestry staff, and that local and regional forest planning groups will particularly stress the staff capacity of agencies that do not have regular staff at the district or local level. People asked for clarification on how agencies will be expected to meet this staffing crisis, raised questions about plans to finance staff increases, and also addressed the issue directly. †

"Assign one key Ministry employee in the local forestry office to deal with old growth issues as they arise: with the companies, with local government and the local public" (questionnaire response, no name given) †

"Funding an absolute must! Without it the process will fail." (S. Rosang, Terrace, B.C.)†

"This program will require money and staff to get rolling and as a tax payer I support that. I also accept the need for long term staff increases to ensure the program works as planned. I expect to see more biologists employed by the forest service , as some of this work will require different expertise than foresters have." (Jackie Morris, Revelstoke B.C.) †

"If you want all these Local, Regional etc. groups, who will pay ?" (questionnaire response, no name given) †

The issue of compensation to industry and concern over costs of reserve allocation process was raised from numerous perspectives. †

* To be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives.
† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

"To my thinking the Old Growth Strategy is incomplete without an up-front compensation strategy as part and parcel of the package." (Colin Pike, Salmon Arm, B.C.)†

"Mention is made of the socio-economic rationalizations government must make with respect to this process but compensation for tenure holders gets no mention." (questionnaire response, no name given, Revelstoke, B.C.) †

"When we, the people of B.C., through our government decide that we want to set aside and preserve an area of old growth forest, it is very difficult to accept that we must spend millions of dollars to obtain this tract from a forest company." (Boundary Naturalists, Grand Forks, B.C.) †

*"The whole provincial forest and land use administration needs a major re-organization towards simplification and greater efficiency. The proposed 'Land Use Bodies' may be a good idea, but only if they replace several other 'Bodies'." (Joop Burgerjon, Halfmoon Bay, B.C.) **

*"When one considers future set asides that we know are coming from the Clayquot Sound Steering Committee, Parks Plan 90 initiatives, the NDP governments policy to double B.C.'s park system, the new 'Guidelines to Maintain Biological Diversity in TFL #44 and TFL #46' and the new Stephen Owen Commission, then it becomes even more of a question as to the usefulness of this Old Growth Strategy and where it fits in." (Share Our Forests, Cobble Hill, B. C.)**

*"Develop guidelines similar to the B.C. Coastal Fisheries/Forestry Guidelines, based on scientific knowledge and input." (questionnaire response, no name given) **

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

Policy Considerations

Respondents discussed the need for policies that demonstrate long term consistency in goals, implementation practices, assessment, and evaluation, and that these would be easier to achieve within a coordinated land-use system. The role and potential power and effectiveness of a 'neutral agency' was also questioned. *

The issue of numerous, somewhat overlapping initiatives and increasing bureaucracy was portrayed in a generally negative light. Some respondents stated that we should make sure to examine other policy initiatives in B.C. and elsewhere to look for models. *

Other policy issues that were raised in meetings and briefly in written submissions were about timing of legislation to provide a legal base for the Old Growth Strategy and whether that would actually fall within the Commission on Resources and Environment's mandate. *

There were also questions about who will ultimately be in charge of decision-making on set-asides and questioning whether government will introduce any actions to deal with areas where the only scarce representative forest is on private land. *

* To be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives.
† Tobe clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

Agency Interaction and Jurisdiction

The issue of how various resource agencies will interact with regard to the strategy recommendations was brought up by many respondents and public meeting participants. Main issues raised for consideration were:

- How agencies collaboration will be facilitated and which agency will lead which component of strategy; *
- How conflicts in jurisdictions will be resolved, particularly with regard to subsurface resources †
- The need to clarify how old growth issues fit into native land claims issues, and the possibility of asking them to take part with a specific 'without prejudice to land claims' understanding. *

The need to coordinate local, provincial and federal government planning initiatives was also brought up by a number of people including one local government.

> *"Most local governments in B.C. have highly developed land use planning systems already in place. It would therefore be worthwhile to develop an effective liaison between provincial and local government planning frameworks in the context of this project." (Regional District of Kootenay Boundary, Trail, B.C.)*

Structures and Processes

The feasibility of the division of tasks and responsibilities, at local, regional and provincial levels, as proposed in the Old Growth Strategy were questioned by some respondents.

> *"The inclusion of members of the public as stakeholders at the Forest Planning Team level will likely see the process grind to a halt. There is nothing wrong with involving the public in setting policy and broad objectives, but at some point managers must be given the freedom to manage." (D.C. Bebb, Sechelt, B.C.)*

> *"Watch out with too much over-dependence on local control – this has often meant that those in power get their way – the small fellow often loses i.e. the small businessman, the local environmental group. Don't opt out of your responsibility to set provincial standards." (questionnaire response, no name given)*

Some people felt that incorporating old growth structures and functions into existing processes was a problem because they perceive existing major faults within those processes. *

> *"Presently the agency referral system does not work. It takes 2 - 3 years to get a (5 year) Management Working Plan approved. A 5 Year Development Plan takes 2 years to be approved. A PHSP requires 8 - 10 months to make its way through the bureaucratic jungle. If the proposed process will expedite the present approval system through improved interagency coordination, reduced redundancy of function within Ministries, and increased local accountability, it is long overdue." (Dave Harrison, Campbell River, B.C.) **

> *"I have come to the conclusion that consensus is difficult if not impossible without more informed input from experts other than professional foresters. I believe that there is a need for many more biologists and ecologists working in the forests paid and coordinated by a body that is not seen to be in a position of conflict of interest." (David Hamblin, 100 Mile House, B. C.) **

* To be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives.
† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

People asked for clarification on how impasses will be resolved between groups or individuals with conflicting interests and values, and on how information and decision-making flows will take place between levels.

> *"We are concerned that our small community will not have a voice in decision making compared to large centres like Vancouver and Victoria. Our community could be directly affected by decisions made by people in the urban centres where they are not dependent on the forest industry as we are." (The Corporation of the Village of Pemberton, Pemberton, B.C.)*

Objectives and guidance for structuring local processes and incorporating local initiatives and priorities was stated as a necessity, especially given the resource constraints of local individuals and groups that was raised in the Public Involvement section.

> *"A step-by-step how-to procedure for how local planning groups are formed and operated is necessary." (questionnaire response, no name given)*

STAKEHOLDER INTEGRATION

Representation of all local interests, individuals and groups, was raised repeatedly in a number of contexts throughout the meetings and written comments the Old Growth Project received.†

> *"I suspect that the public at large is not what is meant by 'affected stakeholder groups', but rather corporations and prominent non-government organizations. It is really important that the range of pubic interests (values) relating to the land be represented on land use bodies." (Rosemary Fox, Smithers, B.C.)* †

> *"Participation of the majority of old growth users should be encouraged, particularly when this majority lives outside the areas for which a strategy is to be implemented, as in southwestern B.C." (Federation of Mountain Clubs of B.C., Vancouver, B.C.)* †

There was also considerable discussion of how to educate and motivate people to participate in informed and responsible decision-making on local committees, a number of possibilities were raised including:

- professional consultants
- options development by teams of experts
- highlighting local relevance of issues and larger goals

> *"Given the extreme complexity of both the information and the process one has to follow to unearth it, piece by little piece, in relation to forestry practices and resource management practices more generally, how is the public involvement strategy planning to ensure there is a full, wide, informed, cross section of participation as well as of perspective or point of view? Recommended: that the 'experts in forest harvesting and resource management not be given the sole responsibility to involve the public because they have not acquired these skills either through training or the requirements of their jobs, which have been more technical than social." (Patricia Keays, Powell River, B.C.)* †

* To be drawn to the attention of CORE and agencies responsible for other initiatives.
† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.

"I'm appreciative of attempts to involve stakeholders. But many are volunteers and are getting more and more overworked without pay or expenses. Professionals and agencies must be relied upon to carry out the strategy – it's too much to expect volunteers to supervise them." (questionnaire response, no name given) †

A number of people also recognized that it was very important to the consensus and decision-making processes that industry and forest workers be committed to the processes.*

"You should plan out in detail, how you are going to convince the logging community that protecting old growth attributes is now a worthy cause. ... you can come up with all the guidelines and policies you want but the contract loggers are the bottom line for making this strategy work. (Friends of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier, Revelstoke B.C.) *

RESEARCH AGENDA

Comments on the Research section of the Strategy tended to be quite brief and supportive, however a variety of research areas were raised as needing more emphasis:

- soils and tree-top organisms;
- the carbon cycle and the ability of old growth to sequester carbon;
- adaptive behaviour of owls and other old growth dependent species ?
  will they move? will they use second growth;
- medical potential of yew trees. †

The question of who should be responsible for doing research led to a number of suggestions:

- Ministry of Forests alone;
- Ministries of Forests and Environment;
- variety of government agencies and independent organizations. †

There was also comment that if the underlying assumptions of all research in the strategy were put forward, the information would be more acceptable. †

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation timelines received considerable comment, with a diversity of opinions expressed. *

"Needs to be done as quickly as possible to stabilize the situation and to allow people to adjust and get on with the job." (Andy Motherwell, Quesnel, B.C.) *

"I'd like to see this project terminated until after an inventory is done and the painful process of drastically reducing the rate of harvest has begun." (Glenn Grieve, Terrace, B.C.) *

"Go slow and easy, continue with a balance of public involvement and strive for a fair balance for all of B.C." (questionnaire response, no name given) *

Other implementation issues raised included:

- concern that strategy recommendations will mesh with other land use planning initiatives, and *
- a concern over the Ministry of Forests being the lead implementing agency because of a historical bias in favour of industry. *

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† To be clarified and elaborated in the strategy document.